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# THE EXTENSION LADDER

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### THE PRINCIPLES OF SALESMANSHIP APPLIED TO EXTENSION

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It has been often said that the extension job is a selling job. What is meant is that in obtaining action on a suggested scheme for agricultural or home improvement the minds of the farmer and his wife must be brought into a favorable attitude toward it, and that in approaching this the mental processes are essentially those governing the sale of merchandise. To a degree this parallel is true with certain important differences which should be kept in mind.

(1) There is no "sale" in extension work. A person's attitude toward what he pays for is very different from what it is toward what is given to him and the approach must be modified accordingly.

(2) The extension material is intangible - abstract. There is nothing definite to deliver. It more nearly parallels the sale of stocks or insurance than of merchandise in that it contemplates a future benefit rather than a value-received proposition.

(3) When a "sale" is completed and a purchaser has signed on the dotted line a legal obligation is set up that enforces action. This is not possible in extension work.

The important differences between the rules governing salesmanship and those of extension teaching are in the point of delivery. A fat order book means handsome commissions to the salesman. It means only the beginning of hard work to the extension agent. Up to the point of acceptance, however, and with the above important limitations the principles of salesmanship do have broad application.

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In exciting a favorable mental attitude toward the acceptance of an idea and the performance of an act, the mind must pass through the processes of attention, interest, confidence, desire, and acceptance or action. In bringing about this attitude of acceptance or willingness to act, the extension worker encounters certain difficulties, the overcoming of which is the test of his ability as a "salesman." Let it be granted that we possess an article which our prospective customer might own to his advantage; if we fail to make the sale the fault is ours, not the prospect's. Extension workers should keep that fundamental truth in mind. A sale is a battle of wits. It is the seller against the buyer and the best man wins.

When we refer to a community as backward as an excuse for little or no extension work, what we really mean is that we have not been smart enough to find the way in. When we style a man as "prejudiced," "stubborn," or "opposed," what we really mean is that up to the present time he has defeated us. The extension agent should look upon every farm family in his county as a possible customer or client, and in relation to them he can be either an order-taker or a salesman. There are both kinds of extension agents. The order-taker works chiefly with those who are ready to take the desired action of their own volition. Some "work" of this kind may occasionally get into extension reports. It does not require a great deal of ability to ladle out sugar and measure off blue denim that a customer comes in to purchase. These waiting or easy orders are welcome, of course. They help increase our profits in the form of results, but they are not especially interesting.

The customers we need most in extension work are the ones we do not get. Suppose we have an article that would be greatly to their advantage to possess, and that they either do not know it or do not appreciate its value. This brings us to a consideration of what is sometimes called the law of satisfaction. There was a time, not so long ago, when it was considered smart to browbeat, cajole, or deceive a customer into a purchase. It did not matter that the goods would be dead on the customer's shelves and net him naught but loss and dissatisfaction. The test was to get his order and his money and let him worry. This is the law of caveat emptor carried to the N'th degree. It is a recurrence to the Machiavellian idea that the end justifies any means. No responsible business house would retain that kind of a salesman over night in this day. It really is not salesmanship, but just plain swindling. By hunting a little we might find an example of this type still extant in some of the recent real-estate transactions, and perhaps meet one occasionally as an oil or mining-stock salesman. Happily, this is no longer considered good salesmanship.

In extension work as in salesmanship, it is not the first order but the second and succeeding orders that are of first importance. "A satisfied customer is the best advertisement"; "The public be pleased"; and "The guest is always right" are business slogans that have been adopted because they are good business. We are all agreed that there is little, if any, downright dishonesty or conscious swindling in extension work, but we do need to keep always in mind the satisfaction of our customers. Does the farmer really need our goods? Will he profit by them?







It is good to be working for a well-established house whose trademark is a guarantee of quality; but the salesman does not rely on the house's general recommendation. If he is a good salesman he is all the time studying the customer's needs and a wise sales management is keenly alive to the field reports of conditions in the trade territory. The agricultural college and the United States Department of Agriculture are responsible houses and carry a dependable line of goods; but the county extension agent and specialist need to be wary about repeating a general sales talk learned in the office, laboratory, or classroom. It is right here that fine, well-meaning extension agents sometimes go wrong. If we are to achieve the satisfaction desired, we must subdue our enthusiasm for general truths; try our gold in the acid; and having tried all things, hold fast only to that which has proved good. For example, dairying may be a good thing generally for a community, but not necessarily for every farmer in it. We must give some attention to the man-cow combination. The young, or inexperienced in extension work are the ones most likely to err in this field. They still have their illusions, and it is too bad they have to lose them and find out that there are only a few things that are really true under all conditions. The wise extension agent will test, not guess, and like the true salesman, hold back the overenthusiastic customer to a small order of a new line while he tries them out on his trade.

To illustrate the extension application of this principle: Head lettuce may have shown its adaptability to a community and may yield a handsome profit to the grower, and an acre or less may be a good thing on many farms in the community, but hardly 30 acres on any one farm for the first year. In one case at least such acreage was included in an annual report as "grown following agent's suggestion." The farmer suffered disappointment and loss.

An extension agent once demonstrated the effectiveness of a spray application in the production of sound, smooth fruit. The farmer saw the effect of this demonstration and was persuaded by the agent to purchase a rather expensive power-spraying outfit. He used it effectively and had hundreds of bushels of fine, perfect fruit of an unsalable summer variety on his orchard. The farmer was sore - sore at the county agent. Unreasonable? The county agent thought so. In these illustrations the farmer is not without fault, but the extension agent oversold his goods. It was the agent's business to get all the facts before giving his advice. In that direction lies satisfaction.

Before taking up the laws of the sale for detailed analysis and application, let us look briefly at the seller. He, the buyer, and the thing to be sold, are the factors that enter into every sale. The salesman and the extension agent possess certain qualities in common. We are concerned here only with these common qualities, and if an extension agent possesses these in a high degree he will be on the high road to success. He must:

- (1) Have a pleasing, positive personality.
- (2) Know his stuff.



Both of these can be acquired virtues. To a degree a man's personality may be an expression of his heredity and environment. Perhaps it usually is, but it is not necessarily so. Personality is largely a matter of thinking. It lies within the power of every man to develop or improve his personality. The only question is: Is he sufficiently earnest in his desire for such improvement?

(1) Nothing in the world can keep a man from being an optimist if he thinks optimistic thoughts, and nothing can save him from being a soured pessimist if he thinks pessimistic thoughts. If one finds one's self slipping into the slough of despond it is time to cultivate new and cheerful people and read cheerful, optimistic literature and nurse generous thoughts. Give your good impulses a square deal. You always have them. The pleasing personality usually expresses itself in healthful vigor, a cheerful face, a warm handclasp, a bright eye, and inviting smile. We have all heard of the man with the million-dollar smile and there are many smiles worth that. It is the kind of a smile that can not be painted on. It is an inside smile that shines through. It can not be cultivated or practiced before a mirror, but it will come of itself from the right kind of thinking. A pleasing personality will express itself in dress, speech, and manner. Its key word is "courtesy."

A salesman's or extension agent's personality must be positive. Confidence is infectious. We are just beginning to appreciate the tremendous influence of suggestion. Now, an extension agent's line, if he is selling anything, is chiefly ideas. His job is to lead people to more accurate thinking, more fortunate decisions, more intelligent action. This requires the highest type of salesmanship ability.

It is but a truism to say that the salesman must possess the goods that he is selling. If the extension agent is to develop the power of accurate thinking, fortunate decisions, intelligent action in others, he must possess this power himself. He must be dynamic, forceful, magnetic, enthusiastic, which are the reflexes to a positive personality. The key to a positive personality is faith. Faith in your job, faith in yourself, faith in your customer. Lose faith in any of these and you are lost. The salesman must first sell the goods to himself. The good extension agent or salesman looks his prospect straight in the eye in presenting his case. This in itself is the very expression of faith, confidence, and honesty. It has been said, "If you can hold your prospective customer's eye for three consecutive minutes he is yours." Such is the hypnotic power of the eye when it is lit with the fire of truth and enthusiasm.

We should never approach a prospect negatively. I was with a county agent last summer. He stopped his auto by the roadside, and I accompanied him to a farmer, who was at work in a near-by field. He wanted to interest this farmer in joining a bull block. After a few introductory pleasantries, the county agent said, "John, I don't suppose you would be interested in joining the bull block we are organizing would you?" He was not. As we were walking back to the car the agent remarked, "That fellow is a hard nut. I have never been able to interest him in anything." It was no wonder. He had lost faith in himself and had lost faith in his prospect. His negative-mindedness ruined





his sales talk. So much for qualification. (1) A pleasing and positive personality. If you do not have it - get it! You can. (2) The county agent or salesman must know his stuff.

It seems almost commonplace to say this and yet it is a characteristic altogether too uncommon. It is not just general knowledge that wins, but interesting information regarding details.

To illustrate: In connection with some Christmas shopping this year a gentleman desired an article that was made of silk. He went to one of the large department stores and asked the salesman for the article. The salesman said most politely, "Now, I am sorry we don't have that in silk at present. Of course, we can get it for you, but let me show you the same article in rayon." Now rayon was a new term to the customer and he had a prejudice against "something just as good." He thought he knew what he wanted, but the salesman had the article before him before he could get away, and in the next 5 minutes he told him a lot about rayon, how it was discovered, where it was made, how it was made, the articles that were being made of it, the increasing volume of sales, and who were using it. He put it into the customer's hands. The customer bought it. That kind of salesman in all probability will have his own department store some day.

The best conversationalist that I ever knew kept a little vest-pocket memorandum book in which he jotted down a few figures, names, and details concerning matters of immediate public interest. When the conversation of a party of which he was a member turned to any of these matters concerning which perhaps 99 per cent of the general public would have only the most general knowledge, he easily took the lead. What he said carried weight and conviction because he knew just a little more than the average. An extension agent can not know everything and must be modest enough and honest enough to admit that he does not, but he must be careful when and where he does the admitting.

Let us now take up the so-called laws of the sale. The salesman must:

- |                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) Attract attention.  | (4) Awaken desire.      |
| (2) Excite interest.    | (5) Get action.         |
| (3) Inspire confidence. | (6) Leave satisfaction. |

In carrying out an extension campaign we should travel much the same road. We will find our farmer constituency in groups with varying relations to the above law. There will be those who have never heard of our proposition. There will be others who are already interested in it, and there will be still others who have confidence and a desire for it. We must plan our campaign to reach all these groups and bring the individuals in them up toward the desired group which acts on our suggestion. A successful selling campaign does not just happen. It is planned. It requires some preliminary scouting. We need to know in what proportion our prospects are in the above groups and plan our extension appeal accordingly. If we are carrying a new line, introducing crops, methods, or a system of farm management almost wholly untried, our plan of attack must be different from conditions where our prospects are all ready to go; where they know



what they want and need only to have provided a means of supplying it. There are considerations in our extension planning which are often overlooked. A lot of good extension powder is sometimes wasted in burning red fire that is not needed. Farmers, in common with the rest of us, know better than they do. Most of us do not do what we want to do, not even what we know we ought to do; we do what we must do.

The crying fault in most extension campaigns is that they are long on devices to attract attention, develop interest, and even bring about confidence and desire, but stop short of action, of getting the name on the dotted line, or the nearest approach we can make to that in extension, making it easily possible to do the thing required; that is, readjust the usual relation between annoyance and pleasure and make it easier to do the thing than not to do it. That is the triumph of extension work. Selling campaigns and extension plans are woefully deficient until they do just that. Let us now briefly analyze some of the normal extension activities and see how they group themselves in regard to the laws of selling. For convenience, we will make certain combinations which for this short discussion of the subject are permissible. We will reduce our laws to three:

- (1) Attracting attention and interest.
- (2) Inspiring confidence and desire.
- (3) Getting acceptance and action.

What are our extension tricks to attract attention and interest? The classification suggested will vary somewhat with different projects and extension agents, and they, of course, will merge into each other. The classification is based on experience and observation of the normal and usual influence exerted by the activities; that is, more than 50 per cent of their power is in the field designated.

For the purpose of attracting attention and interest we have a considerable list of devices. Among those most commonly used are slogans, posters, demonstration signs, photographic enlargements, charts, public addresses, farmers' institutes, extension schools, round-ups, picnics, fair exhibits, demonstration trains, working models, motion pictures, lantern slides, radio, newspaper articles, bulletins, and circular letters. These are the usual devices and they fall largely or wholly into the field of attracting attention and interest. Of course, action may grow directly out of a speech or newspaper article but not usually. They are not primarily for this purpose, and it does not do to rely on them to get results.

What do we do to inspire confidence and desire? Our list here is shorter. It includes:

- (1) Farm or home visits.
- (2) Office calls on the agent.
- (3) Work of local leaders.
- (4) Demonstration meetings where some activity is performed by the farmer participant. This corresponds to getting the article in his hands.





- (5) Auto tours.
- (6) The experience of successful farmers.
- (7) Farm management records that show a practical application.
- (8) Comparative demonstrations - that is, those with checks.
- (9) Contests.
- (10) Boys' and girls' club work.
- (11) Specialist work.

As a rule, there will be a little more action growing out of these activities than in the list given under Attention and Interest, but still not enough to depend on. They may sometimes result in fairly good work but never in high-class work from the standpoint of results.

If we stop with these activities our prospect will, in many cases, be willing to act and ready to act but still unable to act because an existing or imaginary obstacle hinders or prevents.

What do we have in the field of making acceptance and action easy? The list here is still shorter. It includes:

- (1) Establishing a motive to do the thing desired. Usually the greatest motive is profit.
- (2) Making a supply of the materials needed to accomplish the desired action easily available; i.e., develop a motive for some one to handle these materials.
- (3) Arrangement for cash or credit.
- (4) Marketing arrangements, either cooperative or otherwise.
- (5) Organization of producing associations, such as seed associations to procure a sure source of good seed, dipping vats, and bull blocks.
- (6) Follow-up work by farm leaders.
- (7) Follow-up visits by extension agents and follow-up letters.
- (8) Getting lists of farmers or signed cards for them, promising action.

These are the clinchers. Do you have them in your extension selling plan? If not, you can increase your "sales," your results, 50 per cent by including them. They fall short of the salesman's order book but they are our nearest approach to it.

Let us now take up a few plans of work of the county extension agents and group the things done in terms of these laws of the sale.

- (1) Attention and interest.
- (2) Confidence and desire.
- (3) Acceptance and action.

#### A WYOMING SANITARY MILK PLAN OF WORK

- (1) To attract attention and interest:
  - (a) The extension agent scouted his territory and obtained a list of prospects who should be interested.
  - (b) He sent them a carefully planned series of circular follow-up letters giving facts. He got the community talking about his project.



(2) To inspire confidence and action:

- (a) The extension agent immediately capitalized the awakened interest by advertising the visit of the dairy extension specialist from the college.
- (b) Together they made a large number of farm visits.
- (c) They took individual samples of milk and made individual reports.
- (d) They showed general conditions at a meeting immediately following the farm visits/<sup>where</sup>the milk and the test were both in evidence.

(3) To get action:

- (a) The extension agent established a motive - profit.
- (b) He demonstrated the practicability of the required action by showing that quality cheese would bring an increased price.
- (c) He obtained the cooperation of the local cheese factory in paying a premium for clean milk.
- (d) He gave wide publicity to the results.
- (e) He established community pride in sanitary conditions.

This is a sample plan of work. Nothing spectacular about it, but it produced a good volume of sales because it was particularly strong on (2) - Inspiring confidence and desire; and (3) - Getting action. Note also that use was made of those farmers who were "doing the thing desired"; that is, the agent had some cheese made from the milk of selected herds already producing clean milk and demonstrated how this could be sold at a premium price. This part of his plan did two important things: (a) It furnished an impelling motive to clean up,--assured profit. (b) By showing the producers of clean milk that they were being forced to sell their milk on a dirty-milk basis and what this differential was, he established a motive for them to become community leaders in his clean-milk campaign. He removed the difficulties. He made it possible to do the things desired.

This analysis plan has equal application to plans of home demonstration agents or specialists. Following is a grouping of the extension activities in connection with a plan of work in human nutrition.

A New Mexico Human Nutrition Plan

(1) To attract attention and interest.

- (a) Posters were made and put up in different parts of the county.



- (b) Motion pictures, lantern slides, and bromide enlargements were exhibited throughout the county.
- (c) Addresses were given before both county and town audiences.
- (2) To inspire confidence and desire.
  - (a) Local leaders were selected, instructed, and trained in presenting the object of the nutrition project in their home communities.
  - (b) A result demonstration by the home demonstration agent in her own family to prove her faith in the work.
  - (c) Home visits were made, many families weighing and measuring the children.
  - (d) Junior clubs were organized in hot school-lunch work.
  - (e) Junior-work individual result demonstrations were conducted.
  - (f) Publicity of the results in hot school lunches conducted in the county the previous year.
  - (g) Comparative exhibits showing children and animals with good and bad nutrition habits.
  - (h) Help of the specialist.
  - (i) Result demonstrations increased from 3 in 1924 to 182 in 1925. Junior-demonstration team gave 8 public demonstrations. Demonstrators distributed 100 food-habits score cards and 200 food charts.
- (3) To get acceptance and action.
  - (a) Making a study of the food habits and available food materials to avoid danger of recommending impractical or expensive foods.
  - (b) Materials obtained from 12 States.
  - (c) Leaders supplied with necessary material for carrying on project and making demonstration.
  - (d) Financial aid obtained from women's clubs. Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs for hot school-lunch work.
  - (e) Milk goat donated by State child's welfare president for infant feeding. Arranged with the agricultural college to procure milk goats by farmers at minimum cost.







(4) Sales - results.

- (a) Seventy-nine per cent increase in families balancing diet as recommended.
- (b) Eighty-eight per cent increase in improved practices in child feeding, town and country people asking for help in nutrition work.
- (c) The success of the work has attracted attention to nutrition work in other counties.

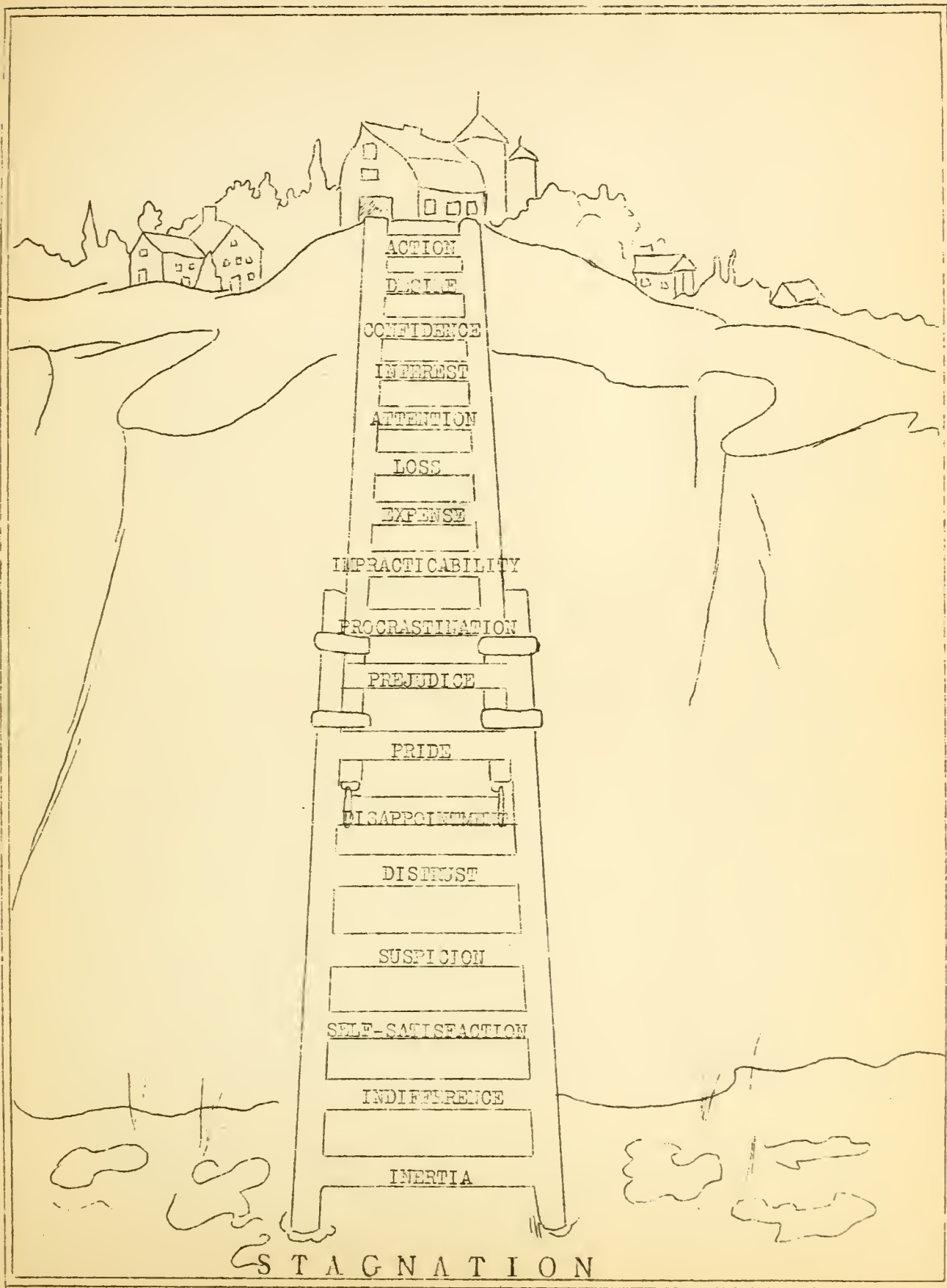
The Extension Ladder

Before an extension plan can be intelligently developed, it is necessary to know the attitude of the people to be reached toward it. The extension agent's task is to get people to do the things he thinks they ought to do because they think they ought to do them. In the street vernacular, he must "sell his stuff." In extension teaching the best selling is done when the customer (farmer) acts subconsciously, without, or only dimly, recognizing why he acts, or rather who motivates him. The highest teaching skill is reached when reactions come thus intuitively. That much extension teaching is of this high order is confirmed by the fact that farmers have difficulty in telling just what influence causes them to change practices.

To do work of this high order the extension agent must know the farmer's mind and understand the nature of his objections. This "knowing the mind" is an exceedingly difficult undertaking. Only the merest borderland of this object has been explored. Why we do what we do is still largely a mystery. Freud, Jung, Nietzsche, James, Adler, and a few others have given us a little insight into how the mind behaves. Perhaps getting along with people is more an art than a science. The hereditary contribution of the human and animal mind to the thinking process is undoubtedly large. This is still a speculative field. It is probable that the most responsive influences in human behavior are those acquired in infancy. If this theory be accepted then its practical application in extension work is to study and know something of individual minds rather than the mass mind of a possible extension clientele. Of the reactions of the mass farmer mind, if indeed there be any such mass attributes, little or nothing is known. Extension work is dealing with people rather than things, and success will crown those who understand them best. In our pathway to "attention and interest" the mind will encounter certain obstacles which must be overcome. The means by which these are removed may be called the steps in the extension ladder.

In the illustration the obstacles rather than the means of overcoming them appear on the rungs of the ladder because the remedial agencies are variable factors differing almost with each individual dealt with. The list: Stagnation, inertia, indifference, self-satisfaction, suspicion, distrust, disappointment, pride, prejudice, procrastination, expense, and loss are the most common obstacles, and perhaps every person worked with will have one or more of them. It is the extension agent's business to discover these







objections or obstacles, find out why they exist in the mind and develop a means of removing or surmounting them. This will measure his ability as a teacher or salesman. Man has been described as "a bundle of prejudices on legs," or put it in another way, "very few people ever really change their minds. What they do is to readjust their prejudices." Now a man has a right to his prejudices. Most people come by them honestly. To the person entertaining the objection it is always reasonable. Breaking them down is the extension agent's first big order. They lie in the direct pathway to "Attention and Interest." We can not get to first base until these objections are out of the way. Perhaps sometime this may all be crystallized into a science or rule of thumb. At present there are few generalizations that will help; but let us climb our ladder.

Stagnation. - Communities are stagnant, dependent on the relative proportion of static and active minds. Stagnation is often caused by isolation, inbreeding, lack of education, racial, and at times cult influences. If the percentage of static minds is large the active-minded people in the community can do little of themselves toward community betterment because of the discouragement under which they suffer from previous ineffective attempts and the obstructionist attitude characteristic of a static mind toward neighborly influences. Stagnant communities usually require waking up from the outside.

Such communities are not public-minded and do not respond to altruistic appeal. A flank attack is usually most effective rather than a direct attack to improve conditions. The introduction of a motion-picture film at a schoolhouse with a comparatively gross comedy appeal and with no teaching motive may be the best entrance. Organization of a base ball or horseshoe tournament may be an effective introduction. Such communities must be lifted out of themselves by something new and simple. Games are good because they require personal participation. The first help; that is, extension work in such communities, must be personal. Confidence must be won to the agent personally, not to his work. After the people of the community believe in him as a person and a good fellow, they may become interested in what he is doing. Their progress toward community effort will be slow. Infinite patience is required of the extension agent. The percentage of personal work in such communities will always be necessarily large. Demonstrations must be reduced to the simplest terms. One thing at a time is the rule for such communities. If 75 per cent of the community is static-minded an extension program aimed at the 25 per cent that is active-minded will never accomplish much in the way of agricultural or home improvement. All communities have this to overcome. It is one of the factors in the extension equation that needs to be always considered. Inertia, Indifference, Self-satisfaction, Suspicion, and Distrust are outstanding characteristics of a stagnant community or static-minded individuals. The extension effort must be first directed to overcome these obstacles.

Disappointment is more or less a serious extension obstacle. So much in the way of advice has been given to country people from a great variety of agencies, not all of which has been well considered, that there exists a relatively large amount of Disappointment and consequent Expense and Loss. It matters little that the extension service itself may not be the





source of the wrong advice; the farmer is not discriminate about these things. He is little concerned regarding the source of the proposed plan. He only knows it did not work and that he lost by the transaction. Nor does it matter that the failure may be in whole or in part attributable to his own lack of attention to details. In this respect the extension service must answer for the mistakes of others as well as its own. Excuses, explanations, "buck passing" will not overcome disappointment. Here the farmer has a right to a demonstration and perhaps a redemonstration. If the disappointment has been widespread or large, a publicly financed demonstration or guaranteed trial may be the only means of establishing a restoration of confidence.

The large amount of failure that has attended poorly considered attempts at cooperative marketing has been a strong influence on the sound and worthy extension efforts in this field. Restoring confidence is more difficult than winning it in the first place. The demonstrations under such conditions may well be called tests, and the first sales should be confined to small orders only. A person or community will hardly stand a second disappointment or loss in connection with the same venture. If a singed cat does not avoid the fire there is something wrong with the cat. Loss from a poorly constructed silo, disappointment because of loss in introducing some bonanza crop, are often reasons why good demonstrations do not take. The extension agent must keep looking until he finds out what is wrong and then use his head in correcting what is wrong with the other fellow's head.

Pride is both a good and a bad quality. A farmer is probably entitled to a reasonable pride in what he knows concerning his business. He has been working at it a long time. Of course, extension agents do not approach farmers as if they were ignoramuses. Preaching in extension work has little effect. Capitalizing the farmer's proper pride through counsel with him and cooperation in the arrangement of work will lead him into the desired paths. Once the farmer is taking the desired action he should never be made conscious that he is taking it at the agent's suggestion. Let him think he did it himself, and he will climb to new heights. Credit claiming is both childish and dangerous. Proper pride needs the encouragement of abundant praise. For the other kind of pride that is mere vanity and that "cometh before a fall," it is often only cured by letting the drop take place.

Procrastination is the old enemy that defeats so many ambitious plans. Farmers who are going to do it next year never help swell the extension order book. They must be brought into the "do it now" class. They are interested and have confidence and want to act but unnecessarily put it off. The human animal resents change. Every procrastinator has a perfectly good reason for delay. Usually the difficulty is that the extension agent has not made the motive for improvement strong enough, or brought it home to the individual, or overcome his private objection. It must be made easier to do the required act than not to do it before the average man acts. About 90 per cent of the people seem to be "average."





Prejudice is founded usually on ignorance or misinformation.

Sometimes it is the result of injury ~~or~~ injustice and wrong. Whatever its cause it cannot be cured by argument. Argument only deepens and confirms prejudice. Prejudice in extension work may relate to a number of things: The college, the United States Department of Agriculture, Extension Service; it may be personal against the Secretary of Agriculture, Director of Extension, the specialist, the leader, the county extension agent; it may have its roots in politics or religion. Whatever its cause and regardless of whether it is well or poorly founded, argument will not cure it. An argument is only one jump removed from a dispute, and a dispute is only a short step from a fight. The only cure for prejudice is truth to supplant error; information to supplant misinformation; facts to supplant ignorance. Prejudice has a tremendous power of resistance, feeds on itself and at last destroys itself. The extension worker will put the truth where the prejudiced mind can see it, or at least feel it, but he will not tell him of it. Let him find it. The truth will set him free if he discovers it himself. There is always a key to every man's heart that will unlock the door and let prejudice fly out. It requires some search on the part of the extension worker to find the key and also to get the right person to use it.

Ability to correctly sense a situation, to say the right thing at the right time, to get along with people, is often referred to as a "gift," and it is true it does sometimes exist without conscious cultivation, perhaps as a reflection of family environment in infancy. But calling a good attribute in another a "gift" is usually the compliment which laziness pays to industry. Here is how one county extension agent trained himself to know people - to sell himself, which precedes selling goods. This is how he acquired this most useful of all knowledge; how he made a large percentage of sales; how he conquered the most confirmed objector and how he put him to work distributing samples. He was prepared. That was all. It was very simple. He kept a card index of his farmer constituency. Not an ordinary card index containing name, size of farms, farmers' enterprises, number of livestock, and so forth, all useful and desirable information. He had a confidential file that even his stenographer did not know about. It was the work of several years and consisted of what might be called personal notes concerning practically every man he had met during those years. It gave little items in regard to the man's personal habits, his likes and dislikes; his ambitions; what public men he liked and disliked; his religion; his politics; his prejudices; his children's names; their ambitions; his wife's accomplishments; who were his friends and enemies; who had influence with him; who repelled him. He was adding to it every day, picking up the information incidental to his work, and obtaining information from every conceivable source. He had the "low-down" on nearly 1,000 people - not all of them farmers. It was wonderful to see him work. He knew what subjects to avoid. He knew where a compliment would be appreciated. He overcame objections indirectly. He avoided dangerous subjects. He never argued. He disarmed his opponent before he got his hand on his gun. He was polite. He was courteous. He was tolerant. He was cheerful. He never gave up. He was doing simply what good salesmen and wise politicians everywhere do. He was popular, of course. Everybody liked him. Success crowned his efforts. Now, success is not a gift of the gods. Real success is not the result of an accident or caprice of fortune. It is the result of careful thinking, generous action, fair dealing, and hard work. Every man has a right to it and can have it if he wants it bad enough.



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We rise by the things that are under feet;  
By what we have mastered of good and gain;  
By the pride deposed and the passion slain,  
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet.

We hope, we aspire, we resolve, we trust,  
When the morning calls us to life and light,  
But our hearts grow weary, and, ere the night,  
Our lives are trailing the sordid dust.

We hope, we resolve, we aspire, we pray,  
And we think that we mount the air on wings  
Beyond the recall of sensual things,  
While our feet still cling to the heavy clay.

Wings for the angels, but feet for men!  
We may borrow the wings to find the way -  
We may hope, and resolve, and aspire, and pray;  
But our feet must rise, or we fall again.

Only in dreams is a ladder thrown  
From the weary earth to the sapphire walls;  
But the dreams depart, and the vision falls,  
And the sleeper wakes on his pillow of stone.

Heaven is not reached at a single bound;  
But we build the ladder by which we rise  
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,  
And we mount to its summit, round by round.

Holland.





